



Regional Brownfields Assessment Pilot *Westfield, MA*

Outreach and Special Projects Staff (5101)

Quick Reference Fact Sheet

EPA's Brownfields Economic Redevelopment Initiative is designed to empower States, communities, and other stakeholders in economic redevelopment to work together in a timely manner to prevent, assess, safely clean up, and sustainably reuse brownfields. A brownfield is a site, or portion thereof, that has actual or perceived contamination and an active potential for redevelopment or reuse. Between 1995 and 1996, EPA funded 76 National and Regional Brownfields Assessment Pilots, at up to \$200,000 each, to support creative two-year explorations and demonstrations of brownfields solutions. EPA is funding more than 27 Pilots in 1997. The Pilots are intended to provide EPA, States, Tribes, municipalities, and communities with useful information and strategies as they continue to seek new methods to promote a unified approach to site assessment, environmental cleanup, and redevelopment.

OVERVIEW

EPA Region 1 has selected the City of Westfield as a Regional Brownfields Pilot. Four years ago, a major manufacturer with over 300 employees ceased operations, leaving 29 buildings vacant on a 6.25-acre property in the heart of downtown Westfield. The site housed a boiler manufacturer for nearly 150 years, and fear of the unknown contamination at the site has prevented its redevelopment.

The Westfield Community Development Corporation (CDC) acquired the former H.B. Smith site in November, 1996. The CDC has since been working with a potential developer, members of the community and other key stakeholders to explore reuse options for the site. Westfield has committed approximately \$1 million of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding towards the cleanup and demolition costs.

The city believes that problems will arise if the site is not redeveloped soon, including safety hazards, fire hazards, trespassing, unauthorized use as a temporary shelter by homeless individuals, potential use for drug sales and distribution, vandalism, and personal liability and injury litigation. This area of the city currently has an unemployment rate of seven percent and a poverty rate of 14 percent. Twenty percent of the population are elderly residents.

PILOT SNAPSHOT



Westfield, Massachusetts

Date of Award:
April 1997

Amount: \$197,000

Site Profile: A 6.25-acre former boiler manufacturing facility in downtown Westfield.

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Visit the EPA Brownfields Website at
<http://www.epa.gov/brownfields>

OBJECTIVES

Westfield's goal is to develop strategies for redevelopment of the pilot site with assistance from other economic partners. The pilot will form the basis for future remediation of the site. The city's objectives are to create a working model for cleanup and redevelopment; maximize funding for site assessment, remediation planning, and monitoring; develop criteria and databases to manage information on public/private funds; educate the community on brownfields issues; and initiate strategies for redevelopment of the pilot site.

ACTIVITIES

Activities planned as part of this pilot include:

- Completing preliminary and detailed site assessments of the target site, including installation of monitoring wells;
- Designing remediation strategies for the pilot site;
- Identifying resources for redevelopment;
- Designing community-based educational programs;
- Identifying additional public/private funding and technical assistance for the pilot site; and
- Documenting the pilot progress and applicability as a brownfields redevelopment model.

The cooperative agreement for this Pilot has not yet been negotiated; therefore, activities described in this fact sheet are subject to change.